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CORRECTION

Vol 21, No 7, July 1991
Page 245, Column 2
Children and Young Persons (Protection from Tobacco) Act 1991
Sentence should read: Increases penalties on retailers for the sale of tobacco to children under 16; prohibits the sale of unpackaged cigarettes; and requires notices to be displayed in retail premises and on vending machines stating that sales of cigarettes to children under 16 are illegal.

NOTE

The term 'Britain' is used informally in the *Survey of Current Affairs* to mean the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. 'Great Britain' comprises England, Wales and Scotland.

Shorter Note

EUROPEAN CONVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL CRIME

Britain has ratified the European Convention on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters, which will enhance criminal justice co-operation with certain overseas countries.

Commenting on Britain's ratification on 29 August, Mr John Patten, Minister of State at the Home Office, said that the convention provided a valuable weapon in the fight against international crime, particularly fraud and drug dealing.

In order to comply with the convention, Britain introduced new powers under the Criminal Justice (International Co-operation) Act 1990 (see p 128, 1990) which:

– make it possible to serve on individuals in Britain summonses and other judicial documents relating to criminal proceedings in another country (reciprocal provisions mean that Britain can expect the same assistance in return);

– empower British courts to seek assistance from overseas authorities in obtaining evidence for use in investigations or proceedings in Britain (corresponding provisions enable Britain to respond to similar requests from overseas);

– provide for British prisoners to be temporarily transferred overseas to assist in foreign proceedings, and similarly for overseas prisoners to come to Britain;

– enable British courts to authorise the police to exercise powers of search and seizure for evidence on behalf of other countries; and

– provide for the enforcement in Britain of overseas court orders for the forfeiture of items used in the commission of serious offences.

The convention will enter into force in Britain at the end of November 1991. Other signatories that are party to the convention are Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Israel, Italy, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and Turkey.

Source: Home Office news release, 29.8.91.

External Affairs and Defence

Events in the Soviet Union

Britain's relief at the restoration of the Soviet President, Mr Mikhail Gorbachev, after the failure of an attempted coup during 19–21 August was conveyed by the Prime Minister, Mr John Major, during his meetings with President Gorbachev, the President of the Russian Federation, Mr Boris Yeltsin, and other political leaders in Moscow on 1 September.

The Prime Minister's Visit to Moscow

At a press conference after his meetings, Mr Major said that the failure of the attempted coup was 'a measure of what President Gorbachev and others have achieved over the last few years'. Referring to the stand taken by Mr Yeltsin, he said that Mr Yeltsin's leadership, which was important during the coup, was also crucial as the Russian President and other leaders shaped the future of the Soviet Union and the republics (see map on facing page). Mr Yeltsin has accepted an invitation to pay an official visit to Britain.

Mr Major said that he had a meeting with the prime ministers of the Baltic republics of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia (see pp 64-5), and that Britain would be sponsoring their entry into the United Nations, following their recognition as independent states by Britain and the other European Community (EC) countries on 27 August.

On Western aid, Mr Major said that, although the current requirements were for immediate assistance with food supplies and distribution, there had to be a long-term programme of radical economic reform. The British Government was already helping with a know-how fund project for the complete reform of the food sector in Kiev (see p 425, 1990), with experts soon to travel to the Soviet Union as part of a lifeline team. Mr Major also said that he was to urge the EC to look at the possibility of financing the purchase of food produced in Eastern Europe for distribution in the Soviet Union.

Mr Major was given assurances by Mr Gorbachev and Mr Yeltsin on the need for 'utmost care' to be taken to ensure that nuclear weapons were kept under strict central control.

The Coup

In the early hours of 19 August the Soviet official news agency, Tass, announced that a committee for the state of emergency was being set up to take over the powers of Mr Gorbachev, because of his 'inability, for health reasons, to perform the duties of the USSR president'. On the previous day (18 August) Mr Gorbachev was detained at his official holiday home in the Crimea.

The emergency committee included the deputy President, Mr Gennady Yanayev, the Prime Minister, Mr Valentin Pavlov (until he was replaced on 20 August) as well as the chairman of the Committee for State Security (KGB), Mr Vladimir Kryuchkov, the Interior Minister, Mr Boris Pugo, and the Defence Minister, Marshal Dmitri Yazov.

Later that day, in a broadcast to the Soviet people, the committee claimed that Mr Gorbachev's reforms had come to 'a dead end' and that the Soviet Union had become 'ungovernable', with 'extremist forces' destroying the country in their attempt to seize power. The 'crisis' was also affecting the unified machinery of the country's national

The Soviet Union

ESTONIA
Population
1·6 million
RUSSIAN FEDERATION
Population
145·3 million
KAZAKHSTAN
Population
16·2 million
Mongolia
N. Korea
S. Korea
Japan
KIRGHIZIA
Population
4·1 million
People's Republic
of China
TAJIKISTAN
Population
4·8 million

economy, which had 'taken decades to evolve'.

During 19 August the committee imposed a six-month state of emergency, suspended political activity and banned the publication of all but nine Communist newspapers; independent radio and television stations were also banned. In addition, military rule in Moscow, Leningrad[1] and other cities was imposed.

Opposition

Speaking from the parliament building of the Russian Federation in Moscow on 19 August, Mr Yeltsin denounced the removal of Mr Gorbachev as 'a rightist, reactionary, anti-constitutional coup' and called for a general strike. On 20 August he also demanded an end to all restrictions on the Russian media, the withdrawal of troops, and dissolution of the emergency committee.

In Moscow demonstrators erected barricades around the Russian Parliament and blocked roads leading to it to prevent military units from the Soviet army, the KGB and the Interior Ministry loyal to the committee storming the Parliament. During the night of 20–21 August three civilians were killed when armoured elements attempted to breach one of the barricades. Other army divisions, hitherto reliable, had to be withdrawn by the coup leaders, while other KGB units halted at barricades outside Moscow and refused to go on. Speaking to the Russian Parliament on 21 August, President Yeltsin stated that many Soviet divisions had now taken the side of the Russian Federation.

In Leningrad, which was also surrounded by Soviet forces, thousands of people protested against the coup, calling for the reinstatement of Mr Gorbachev. In the Baltic republic of Lithuania its President, Mr Vytautas Landsbergis, called, on 19 August, for 'civil disobedience and non-collaboration' in the event of martial law being declared by the 'Bolshevik junta'. In Estonia and Latvia, where some Soviet forces had occupied government buildings, and radio and television stations, general strikes were called on 19 August; two days later, both governments proclaimed their independence. These declarations were recognised by the Russian Federation on 24 August. Lithuania's declaration of independence had already been recognised by Russia.

Other reactions to the coup included the announcement by the Ukrainian Parliament that the emergency committee's decrees were null and void; the banning in Moldova of the publication of newspapers approved by the emergency committee; and declarations of independence from the Soviet Union by Belorussia, Moldova and the Ukraine. In Kazakhstan, its President said that the decisions of the emergency committee were based on documents 'known to be illegal, which . . . flout republican declarations of sovereignty and ignore the chosen course towards a market economy'.

International Reactions

Speaking in London on 19 August, Mr Major said that Mr Gorbachev had been removed from office by 'an unconstitutional seizure of power'. The Soviet President's reform process was 'of vital importance to the whole world and . . . to the Soviet people themselves'. The events in the Soviet Union were 'a very ominous development'.

In Washington, the US President, Mr George Bush, said that he would not recognise the new regime, condemned the unconstitutional resort to force, and called for the return to office of President Gorbachev. The United States would not support economic aid if the adherence to extra-constitutional means continued.

Meeting in The Hague on 20 August, foreign ministers of the European Community issued a statement in which they strongly condemned the removal of the Soviet President from office, regarded the seizure of all power as 'a clearly unconstitutional act and a flagrant violation of the Soviet Union's obligations under the Helsinki Final Act and the Paris Charter', and demanded that constitutional order be re-established and Mr Gorbachev reinstated. Until that happened, the statement said, the EC would suspend its economic and technical assistance (worth £625 million). Earlier that day, Britain suspended its £50 million

[1] Following a referendum in the city in June, Leningrad has reverted to its earlier name of St Petersburg.

know-how fund to the Soviet Union. (This decision was revoked on 22 August.)

Meeting in Brussels on 21 August, foreign ministers of the 16 countries of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) condemned 'the use of violence to intimidate members of the reform movement and to suppress democratic institutions'. They also deplored the loss of life that occurred in Moscow on 20 and 21 August.

Failure of the Coup

With opposition at home growing and world condemnation continuing, support from elements in the Soviet army, the KGB and the Interior Ministry for the emergency committee collapsed. Mr Gorbachev was released and brought back to Moscow on 22 August, and the coup leaders were arrested. One of them, the Interior Minister, took his own life.

Addressing the Russian Parliament on 22 August, Mr Gorbachev stated that his whole government ought to resign because of their failure to oppose the coup. When the Supreme Soviet (Parliament) met on 28 August, it approved Mr Gorbachev's decree dissolving the Soviet Government; a small national economic committee, headed by the Russian Prime Minister, was also approved. Other changes included the removal of the entire leadership of the KGB and the transfer of KGB troops to the Defence Ministry.

Earlier, on 24 August, President Gorbachev resigned his post of General Secretary of the Soviet Communist Party because of its failure to take a 'decisive stand of condemnation and resistance' to the coup and called for the dissolution of the party's Central Committee. In a separate decree, he ordered the confiscation of its property. Mr Gorbachev also banned all political organisations from the Soviet armed forces. Some republics (including Kazakhstan, Moldova, the Russian Federation and Tajikistan) had already banned or suspended the Communist Party in their territory. In addition, Mr Yeltsin also suspended a number of Communist publications. (*Pravda* – previously an organ of the Communist Party – resumed publication on 31 August as an independent paper.) On 29 August, the Soviet Parliament suspended the Soviet Communist Party and froze its assets.

Future of the Soviet Republics

On 27 August Britain and the other members of the European Community agreed to establish diplomatic relations with Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. In a declaration issued in Brussels, the EC countries said that they had 'consistently regarded the democratically elected parliaments and governments of these states as the legitimate representatives of the Baltic peoples'. They called for 'open and constructive negotiations' between the Baltic states and the Soviet Union 'to settle outstanding issues between them'. They also confirmed their commitment to support these states in their economic and political development. The implementation of this decision would be taken by the individual EC countries. The United States' decision to recognise the Baltic states was announced on 2 September.

During a BBC radio interview before the EC meeting on 27 August, the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary, Mr Douglas Hurd, pointed out that, unlike the other Soviet republics, these states were independent countries before they were taken over by the Soviet Union in 1940. This action had never been accepted by Britain and many other countries. The Baltic countries had shown, he said, 'their determination to be independent and that is clearly increasingly accepted in Moscow'. In a decree of 6 September, President Gorbachev recognised the independence of the three Baltic states.

On the future of the remaining Soviet republics, Mr Hurd also concluded that it would not be very sensible for them to have separate foreign and defence policies and separate applications to the West for help. Noting that there were minorities, disputes and economic systems in these republics that could not be dealt with simply, Mr Hurd believed that they were entering 'a phase probably of several weeks, maybe longer, in which they are working out a new pattern of co-operation, of working together by consent'.

Earlier in 1991, President Gorbachev and nine out of the 15 republics of the Soviet Union had discussed a draft union treaty, with the signature of the first three republics (including Russia) due to take place on 20 August. At an emergency session between 2

and 5 September, however, the Congress of People's Deputies approved a new plan on the future of the Union based on more radical proposals agreed by ten of the republics and Mr Gorbachev.

This plan includes:

– a Treaty on the Union of Sovereign States, in which each of the republics would independently determine the form of its participation in the Union;

– an economic agreement between republics for co-operation within 'the framework of a single free economic space'; and

– a defence agreement to preserve united armed forces and to carry out radical military reforms.

The plan also includes the creation of:

– a two-chamber Soviet comprising a Council made up of members from each republic's Supreme Soviet (20 seats for each republic except Russia, which would have 52 to accommodate its large population and the various autonomous republics within it),[1] and Council of the Union;

– a State Council (comprising the Soviet President and leaders of the republics) to co-ordinate domestic and foreign policies; and

– an interim economic committee consisting of officials from the republics to co-ordinate management of the economy and to conduct economic reform.

Western Aid

In the United States after discussions with President Bush on 29 August, Mr Major said at a press conference that there was 'a window of opportunity . . . for the speeding up of the economic reform process . . . [which] is absolutely vital for the Soviet Union'. The Soviet Union and its republics most needed 'emergency humanitarian assistance, [and] practical help in converting their economy into one that works'. The Prime Minister considered that aid had to go to those people who were in need, including directly to the individual republics. It also had to be linked to a clear, comprehensive and practical reform plan as well as to a Soviet commitment to a further reduction in defence spending.

The two leaders identified a number of points for action. These were:

– the implementation of existing food credits;

– an assessment of the need for food aid during the winter;

– a provision of teams from the public and private sectors, to be sent to the republics to help achieve efficient food production and distribution;

– the implementation of existing know-how programmes and bilateral agreements on technical assistance; and

– the involvement of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank in helping to work out reform plans.

Background

In 1985 President Gorbachev started reforms in the Soviet Union which included a revitalisation of the political system based on 'openness' (*glasnost*), political and economic restructuring (*perestroika*) and democratisation of government, mainly through decentralisation. The objectives of Mr Gorbachev's reforms were to restructure the Soviet economy, cut down bureaucracy, and allow greater decision-making by local managers.

The media gained more freedom, with increasingly open criticism of the Communist Party's mismanagement and malpractice, while human rights improved, political prisoners were released and emigration (in particular of Jews and dissenters) increased (see pp 374-5, 1989). Many of the party's central committee departments were abolished, while in 1989 Mr Gorbachev was chosen as president of a reconstituted Supreme Soviet by a new elected body, the Congress of People's Deputies. In February 1990, the party's Central Committee abandoned its monopoly of power. Laws permitting private ownership of some means of production were passed by the Supreme Soviet in February and March 1991. At a session of the Congress in June, President Gorbachev was granted powers to effect a transfer to 'a regulated market economy' in which 70 per cent of the economy would have to be removed from state control.

[1] In the Council, however, each republic will have only one vote.

Yugoslavia

At mid-September European Community member states were maintaining their efforts to negotiate an end to continuing violence in Yugoslavia.

In response to escalating hostilities between Croatian and Serbian forces, particularly in eastern Croatia (see p 304), European Community (EC) member states negotiated a ceasefire agreement and convened a Yugoslav peace conference at the beginning of September. However, these moves were overshadowed and undermined by the level of ethnic violence which continued in Croatia.

The European Community's diplomatic efforts to restore peace to Yugoslavia are detailed below.

European Community Declaration

In a declaration issued on 27 August, Britain and its EC partners expressed their concern over the increasing violence in Croatia. Identifying Serbian irregular forces as being responsible for the violence, EC member states reiterated their determination not to recognise frontier changes which were not brought about by peaceful means and by agreement.

They also recognised that elements of the Yugoslav People's Army were actively supporting the Serbian side against Croatia and called upon the Yugoslav Federal Presidency 'to put an immediate end to this illegal use of the forces under its command'.

The declaration continued: 'Territorial conquests, not recognised by the international community, will never produce the kind of legitimate protection sought by all in the new Yugoslavia . . . Without a comprehensive and effective ceasefire and impartial foreign monitors the situation in Yugoslavia cannot be sufficiently stabilised to allow for productive negotiations to be held.'

Community member states considered that the acceptance of a monitored ceasefire would allow them to convene a peace conference and to establish an arbitration procedure. The conference would bring together:

– the Federal Presidency, the Federal Government and the Presidents of the Republics, on the part of Yugoslavia; and

– the President of the EC Council of Ministers, representatives of the member states and the European Commission.

Under the arbitration procedure, the relevant authorities would submit their differences to an Arbitration Commission chosen from the Presidents of Constitutional Courts in EC countries. The Commission would be composed of two members appointed unanimously by the Yugoslav Federal Presidency and three members appointed by the Community and its member states. In the absence of agreement on the members to be appointed by the Federal Presidency, they would be designated by the Community appointees to the Arbitration Commission. The Commission would give its decision within two months.

Concluding, the declaration warned that, if no agreement on a monitored ceasefire and the convening of a peace conference had been reached by 1 September, the Community and its member states would consider additional measures, including international action.

Ceasefire Agreement

On 1 September the Yugoslav federal authorities and the Presidents of the Republics signed an agreement on a ceasefire in Croatia, and also a memorandum of understanding on the extension of the activities of the EC monitor mission in Yugoslavia. The memorandum was also signed by the Foreign Minister of the Netherlands in his capacity as President of the EC Council of Ministers.

Ceasefire Provisions

The ceasefire envisaged the following elements:

– a halt to the use of force;

– the withdrawal by opposing forces from immediate contact and from areas of actual or previous hostilities;

– the disarming and disbanding of all paramilitary forces (other than police forces) and irregular units; and

– the demobilisation of the Croatian National Guard and the return to barracks of the Yugoslav federal army.

The signatories agreed that the monitoring of the ceasefire would be conducted by

the federal army, the Croatian authorities, representatives of the Serbian population in Croatia involved in the hostilities and by the EC monitor mission.

Memorandum of Understanding

Under the terms of the memorandum the activities of the EC monitor mission, established in July (see p 265), would be extended to include the monitoring of the ceasefire in Croatia, once it had become effective. The mission would monitor and report on the implementation of the elements of the ceasefire but would not take part in the enforcing of those elements.

The memorandum stated that the monitor mission would comprise unarmed observers from EC member states, Canada, Poland, Sweden and Czechoslovakia. Other states participating in the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE — see p 304) could also appoint personnel to the monitor mission with the approval of the signatories of the memorandum.

The number of observers in the monitor mission would increase from 50 to about 200 and it was envisaged that the mission would complete its work in mid-October. Observers would be granted the immunities and privileges of diplomatic officials and would enjoy unrestricted movement in the mission area.

Peace Plan

In a declaration on 3 September, Britain and the other EC member states announced that they would convene a peace conference on Yugoslavia on 7 September at The Hague, and at the same time set up an arbitration procedure. They also supported an immediate further enlargement of the monitor mission and the implementation of its extended mandate in Croatia.

The peace conference would bring together the Yugoslav Federal Presidency, the Federal Government and the Presidents of the Republics. The Community and its member states would ensure the chairmanship of the conference, the proceedings of which would be conducted on their behalf by a chairman (Lord Carrington, a former British Foreign & Commonwealth Secretary) on the basis of a mandate from them.

The conference would aim to achieve peace in Yugoslavia based on the following principles:

– no unilateral change of borders by force; and

– protection for the rights of all citizens in Yugoslavia and 'full account to be taken of all legitimate concerns and legitimate aspirations'.

In the framework of the conference, the chairman would transmit to the Arbitration Commission the issues submitted for arbitration, and the results of the Commission's deliberations would be relayed back to the conference by the chairman.

In conclusion, the declaration noted that, subject to the consent of the Yugoslav parties, EC member states were prepared to continue their monitoring activities as long as was necessary for the conference to be successful. The Yugoslav parties were expected to fulfil their obligations accordingly.

Convening of Conference

Despite continuing violence in Croatia in violation of the ceasefire accord, the opening session of the peace conference took place as planned on 7 September.

European Community and Yugoslav representatives adopted a declaration pledging to seek a peaceful settlement 'based on all the principles and commitments agreed upon in the CSCE process' (see pp 261-2). They expressed their determination not to recognise border changes which had not been brought about by peaceful means and called for the immediate observance of all elements of the ceasefire agreement.

British View

Commenting on 7 September on the prospects for peace in Yugoslavia, the Foreign & Commonwealth Secretary, Mr Douglas Hurd, said : 'We in Britain, we in the Twelve, do not have a blueprint for Yugoslavia – what we do have is the offer of help by which they can find an agreed solution for themselves. That is the limit and that is the importance of the European – and I underline European – initiative which has been launched here today.'

British Relations with China

During an official visit to the People's Republic of China between 2 and 4 September, the Prime Minister, Mr John Major, discussed with Chinese leaders Hong Kong, human rights and other international issues, including the situation in the Soviet Union and arms proliferation. Mr Major also signed a Memorandum of Understanding on the construction of an airport in Hong Kong.

Hong Kong

In a joint press communiqué issued in Peking on 3 September, Mr Major and the Chinese Premier, Mr Li Peng, said that the signature of the memorandum would allow the construction of a new airport, 'thereby preserving and enhancing Hong Kong's role as a centre of international and regional aviation'; the signing would also demonstrate both governments' wishes 'to intensify their co-operation over Hong Kong issues' in the approach to the transfer of the territory to China in 1997 and to develop their bilateral relations.

The two leaders expressed their confidence in the future success of Hong Kong as 'an international economic, financial and trading centre'. They confirmed their determination to implement the Joint Declaration (see pp 368-74, 1984) and to consult and co-operate closely 'to achieve a smooth transfer of government in 1997 and to ensure Hong Kong's long-term prosperity and stability'. They also agreed to accelerate work in the Joint Liaison Group so that it could successfully complete all the tasks set out in the Joint Declaration.

The two leaders noted substantial progress was being made in a number of subjects, including the agreement in principle on the early establishment of a Court of Final Appeal in Hong Kong to exercise the power of final judgment. The judges would be appointed on the recommendation of an independent judicial body. In addition, Hong Kong would shortly open negotiations to conclude investment promotion and protection agreements with some major trading partners, 'thus enhancing its role as a centre for international trade and investment'.

During another press conference on 3 September, Mr Major pointed out that the 1984 Joint Declaration reserved the territory's rights and freedoms, including freedoms of speech, press, assembly, association and travel. The new agreement in principle on the establishment of a Court of Final Appeal was, he believed, 'an important safeguard of Hong Kong's judicial independence'.

Other Issues

At the press conference, Mr Major said that he had also raised with the Chinese leaders the question of human rights in China, including the treatment of religious believers in Tibet, the detention of people for exercising the freedom of expression, and the case of four detainees from Hong Kong.

Emergency Aid Plan

Britain is setting up a three-stage emergency aid plan which will allow it to respond promptly and effectively to international disasters.

In a new plan, introduced by the Minister for Overseas Development, Mrs Lynda Chalker, on 14 August, the Overseas Development Administration (ODA) will be able to mount its own relief operation, delivering relief goods direct. The plan involves:

– rapid assessment of need;

– co-ordination of the relief effort; and

– the deployment of skilled personnel.

Assessors

As delivery of the right assistance at the right time is crucial, the ODA will despatch assessors to the disaster area within hours to provide vital information on what needs to be done, enabling the ODA response to be speedy and accurate. This information will be shared with relevant relief agencies.

Field Co-ordinators

The ODA would also consider sending a field co-ordinator to provide on-the-spot management of its own relief effort, to ensure that this dovetails with the work of other agencies and to provide reports of needs and progress.

Disaster Relief Teams

In conjunction with existing volunteer groups and organisations, the ODA is also setting up a register of experienced people from which trained teams could be drawn.

Goods and Equipment

New arrangements for rapid procurement and transport of supplies will ensure that further essential goods and equipment are delivered as soon as possible on request.

Disaster Preparedness

The ODA will also devote more resources to disaster prevention and preparedness. This will involve:

– monitoring emerging or foreseeable crises and taking action to minimise their impact;

– reviewing national and international early warning systems; and

– tackling long-term issues, such as cyclones and flood prevention.

Links with Other Organisations

The ODA will also seek to involve non-governmental organisations in its decisions to mount a direct relief operation, as well as strengthening co-operation with all relevant organisations.

Economic and Scientific Affairs

Renewable Sources of Energy

The Government has announced more funding for tidal, small-scale hydro and wind power projects. The National Wind Turbine Centre has been opened and National Wind Power Limited has been launched.

Tidal Power

Additional government funding of £1·2 million towards a 15-month extension of the third phase of studies for a tidal energy barrage across the river Mersey (see p 291, 1990) was announced on 14 August. The Mersey Barrage Company (MBC) will contribute £300,000 and will carry out the work. The first three stages of the studies have so far cost £5 million, provided jointly by the Government and by the MBC.

The barrage (1·9 km–1·2 miles) would contain 28 turbines, each rated at 25 megawatts (MW). The estimated cost is £1,056 million and energy output about 1,310 GWh[1] a year.

Small-scale Hydro

Organisations interested in small-scale hydro electricity generation are being urged to take advantage of government assistance in funding feasibility studies. Speaking at Roadford Dam, near Okehampton (Devon), on 22 August, Mr Colin Moynihan, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Energy, said that the Government would fund 50 per cent of the cost, up to a maximum of £7,500, for interested organisations without the necessary experience to employ a consultant to undertake such a study. Some £70,000 had so far been committed to 27 studies, with outputs of up to 5 MW.

The first Order of the non-fossil fuel obligation (see p 353, 1990) sets the initial obligation at 102 MW from 75 schemes. Of these, 26 schemes are small-scale hydro, with a declared net capacity of 11·6 MW.

Wind Power

On 30 August the National Wind Turbine Centre (NWTC), part of the National Engineering Laboratory's Energy and Environment Centre, was opened at East Kilbride, near Glasgow. Two MS-3 wind turbines, each with an output capacity of 300 kW, were inaugurated on the site.

Speaking at the opening, Mr Moynihan praised Britain's expertise in wind technology. The Government, he said, had spent over £38 million on wind power research and development over ten years, and expenditure was expected to exceed £7 million during 1991. If wind development programmes were successful, he continued, Britain 'could possibly generate the equivalent of about 10 per cent of current electricity consumption from wind power by the year 2025'. While cautioning that wind turbines had an environmental impact and that development needed to be undertaken sensitively, he pointed to the need to demonstrate the technology successfully to win the confidence of investors. He also stressed how the non-fossil fuel obligation (see p 319, 1990) allowed wind energy to compete with other forms of electricity generation.

The Department of Energy has funded the turbines, at a total cost of about £1 million, in

[1] Gigawatt hours. 1 GW = 1,000 MW. 1,000 kilowatts (kW) = 1 MW.

addition to a further £500,000 it has spent at the site. Scottish Enterprise has contributed some £400,000 towards the site foundations and infrastructure.

Speaking at the launch on 11 September of National Wind Power Limited, a joint venture between National Power, British Aerospace and Taylor Woodrow, the Secretary of State for Energy, Mr John Wakeham, said that complete wind farm packages, which could be installed on suitable sites, were a crucial step towards wind power realising its commercial potential. The non-fossil fuel obligation had led to five proposals for wind farms, and National Wind Power Limited was interested in at least two of them. A new non-fossil fuel Order would be made in the autumn, Mr Wakeham said. He also intended to introduce 'a new non-fossil fuel obligation band reserved for wind projects, which should ensure increased opportunities for wind power'.

Road Safety

Figures for road accident casualties for 1990 have been released, showing a 3 per cent drop in deaths compared with 1989. The figures, which are published in a Department of Transport statistics bulletin,[1] cover Great Britain.

During 1990 there were 5,217 deaths in road accidents. The figure for serious injuries also fell, by 4 per cent, to 60,441. The number of slight injuries was 275,483, a rise of 1 per cent. There was a 1 per cent fall in pedestrian deaths (down to 1,694) and a 3 per cent fall in the number of child pedestrian deaths. Overall, however, child casualties rose by 3 per cent.

The number of pedal cyclist casualties fell by 7 per cent, while the number of deaths among cyclists, at 256, was 13 per cent lower than in 1989. Child cyclist casualties fell by 5 per cent and child cyclist deaths fell by 21 per cent. Motor cyclist, moped and scooter rider casualties fell by 8 per cent and deaths among them fell by 4 per cent.

[1] *Quarterly Road Casualties Great Britain: Final Figures 1990.* Department of Transport statistics bulletin (91)33. Available from Department of Transport sales unit, Building 1, Victoria Road, South Ruislip, HA4 0NZ. £4.

Roads

The Government has announced proposals to increase competition in road repair and for the private sector provision of a northern relief road for Birmingham. More help for surveying archaeological remains affected by new road development has also been announced.

Birmingham Northern Relief Road Concession

The Government believes that the private sector has a small but increasing part to play in the roads programme (see pp 157-8). As part of this, the selection of Midland Expressway Ltd (MEL) as the operator of the Birmingham Northern Relief Road was announced on 12 August by the Secretary of State for Transport, Mr Malcolm Rifkind. MEL is a joint venture of Trafalgar House and Italstat,

Road Casualties, Great Britain, 1990

	Deaths	Serious injuries	Slight injuries	Total
Pedestrians	1,694	15,666	42,870	60,230
Pedal cyclists	256	4,344	21,822	26,422
Two-wheeled motor vehicle users	659	10,459	27,924	39,042
Car users	2,371	26,745	161,423	190,539
Other vehicle users	237	3,227	21,444	24,908
Total	5,217	60,441	275,483	341,141

and has signed a memorandum of agreement to design, finance, build and operate the route. The proposal is for a 48-km (30-mile) dual three-lane motorway round the north-east of the West Midlands conurbation to relieve the M6 motorway. Tolls would probably be about £1·50 for cars and £3 for lorries, in 1990 prices. The route would cost about £260 million to build. The procedures authorised under the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 (see pp 157-8) will have to be followed. These broadly mirror the procedure for the authorisation of public roads and include public consultation and a possible public inquiry. MEL will be required to produce an environmental impact assessment, which could also be considered at any public inquiry.

Mr Rifkind said that he was pleased with the response of the private sector to the challenge to design and build the scheme. Three good proposals had been received, and the success of MEL would encourage the private sector to bid for other prospective schemes. The risks of the venture would fall on the operator rather than the public purse. It would be necessary to study the impact of private sector toll roads on the size and composition of the public roads programme. 'The Government will be studying how it can build on this breakthrough to reduce the congestion on the trunk road network in the future, and to continue to improve the efficiency with which our roads are built.'

Local Authority Highway Works

Consultations to extend compulsory competitive tendering for all local authority highway works were announced by the Minister for Roads and Traffic, Mr Christopher Chope, on 31 July. He said that most such works had to be put out to tender, but that councils were still permitted to award 40 per cent of works valued at less than £25,000 to a direct labour organisation without competition. Prior to 1987, the allowance had been 70 per cent of works valued at less than £50,000, but the new threshold and percentage allowances were introduced in 1987 and 1988 respectively, thus increasing the scope for competition. The Audit Commission had studied the effects of these changes and found that they had produced cost savings without loss of quality. Mr Chope said that consultations were beginning with the local authority associations on the possibility of a further increase in competition. 'I hope that the result will be to open all local authority highway work to competition.'

Archaeology

Archaeological surveys carried out before trunk road construction will now be funded directly by the Department of Transport, Mr Chope announced on 6 August. He said that this new funding would be in addition to the Department's annual £500,000 grant to English Heritage. As a result of the announcement, more resources would be made available for excavation and the recording of finds. The Department's staff would also be able to build closer links with the local archaeological units.

Surveys to identify the possible impact of a road proposal on archaeological remains are usually part of the environmental assessment which is standard on all national trunk road and motorway schemes. They can lead to a road being realigned or to its level being raised to preserve archaeological remains for posterity.

Research and Development

The Government's annual review of research and development shows that government expenditure in this area in 1989-90 was some £4,800 million, 6 per cent higher than in 1988-89, and represented 3·8 per cent of total central government expenditure. Total research and development expenditure in Britain in 1989, measured according to international definitions, was some £11,500 million, 12 per cent greater than in 1988, and represented 2·3 per cent of gross domestic product.

The 1991 review,[1] issued on 24 July, is the ninth in a series published in response to the

[1] *Annual Review of Government Funded Research & Development 1991.* Cabinet Office. HMSO, £25. ISBN 0 11 430051 8.

first report of the House of Lords Select Committee on Science and Technology in 1982 (see p 260, 1982). It gives details of research and development (R & D) spending by government departments, by the research councils, by the Universities Funding Council (UFC) and by the Polytechnics and Colleges Funding Council (PCFC). It also includes:

– results of the latest Central Statistical Office survey of R & D performed in industry in 1989;

– figures and indicators of R & D carried out in Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries;

– a summary of the European Community Framework Programme;

– details of R & D personnel and indicators of innovative activity;

– figures on planned expenditure up to 1993-94; and

– for the first time, the technological balance of payments.

Government R & D

Total expenditure on R & D carried out by government departments in 1989-90 amounted to £4,800 million, devoted mainly to science and technology. This showed an increase of 7 per cent compared with 1988-89. Total government expenditure is expected to increase by around 13 per cent between 1989-90 and 1993-94.

Out of this total, civil R & D in 1989-90 amounted to £2,700 million, 6 per cent higher than in 1988-89, while defence R & D was £2,200 million, around 1 per cent higher. Defence R & D accounted for 45 per cent of total government expenditure. Its share is expected to be around this level or slightly higher in the next four years and so does not presently reflect changes arising from the 1990 study 'Options for Change' (see pp 275-6, 1990).

Tables in the review give a breakdown of total expenditure by department; by primary purpose (indicating reasons for, rather than the nature of, research); and by type of research activity, indicating proportions of pure, applied and experimental research. The review also provides an analysis of the overall distribution of funding based on the value of the research carried out by different institutions. More detailed tables give the distribution of individual departments' expenditure, which is broken down by subject area and primary purpose.

Civil R & D

Civil R & D accounted for 55 per cent of total government R & D expenditure in 1989-90. Of total expenditure, civil departments accounted for 21 per cent, the UFC and PCFC 18 per cent, and the research councils 15 per cent. Funding for the last three bodies, which comprise the science base, amounted to over £1,600 million – one-third of total government expenditure in this area. The proportion of science-base expenditure devoted to the research councils was 46 per cent.

Out of civil departments' total R & D expenditure of £1,035 million in 1989-90, the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) spent, as in previous years, the largest proportion – around one-third – which amounted to £310 million. Other major spending departments were the Department of Energy (£166 million) and the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF – £112 million).

The DTI has, among other things, introduced three initiatives – worth £48 million in total – to increase R & D and technology transfer support for smaller firms.

MAFF has expanded its environmental conservation work, with increasing emphasis on food safety and nutrition. Detection of food pathogens, crop production, the links between diet and human disease, and bovine spongiform encephalopathy are high priority areas.

As much as 82 per cent of Ministry of Defence R & D expenditure was for experimental research. With the emphasis on expanding the science and technology database for future defence exploitation, research areas included high-temperature superconductivity, electronic systems, signal processing, electro-optics and advanced structural materials.

The Medical Research Council's Clinical Research Initiative will enable collaboration between basic and clinical scientists within a clinical environment. The Natural Environment Research Council conducts programmes on climatic change, including an

Table 1
Expenditure on R & D in Broad Groups of Industry *£ million*

	1978	1981	1983	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989
Chemicals	394	617	735	942	1,038	1,303	1,574	1,692
Mechanical engineering	174	234	250	263	218	241	225	206
Electronics	657	1,235	1,474	1,759	2,000	1,902	2,161	2,259
Other electrical engineering	101	121	118	126	153	142	147	114
Motor vehicles	130	180	240	372	394	451	468	504
Aerospace	425	763	720	818	830	871	850	1,070
Other manufactured products	333	361	334	395	438	463	509	605
All manufactured products	2,213	3,512	3,870	4,673	5,070	5,372	5,933	6,451
Non-manufactured products	112	281	294	448	880	964	989	1,149
Total	2,324	3,793	4,163	5,122	5,951	6,335	6,922	7,600

Note: Differences between totals and the sums of their component parts are due to rounding.

arctic field laboratory for polar environment studies, and the autonomous underwater submersibles (AUTOSUB) deep-ocean project. Research conducted by the Science and Engineering Research Council ranges from pure mathematics and astronomy to the application of science in the engineering industries and commerce, and includes participation in major international projects such as the European Organisation for Nuclear Research (CERN).

The Department of Energy's expenditure is to be adjusted to accommodate changes in nuclear programmes, such as the reduction of fast-reactor research. It contributes to European Community R & D programmes, such as Eureka (see p 281).

Expenditure in Industry

Out of a total expenditure of £5,172 million for industrial R & D funded by government in 1989-90, 30 per cent was taken up by private industry and public corporations. Britain's total expenditure on industrial R & D by business enterprises amounted to a record £7,600 million, an increase of 9·8 per cent compared with 1988-89. Out of this total, industry's own contribution was 70 per cent, with 16 per cent from government and the rest from overseas. In the 1989 four-yearly benchmark survey of intramural R & D spending in industry, companies were required to distinguish between civil and defence R & D for the first time. Compared with the 1985 survey, R & D performed in industry was shown to have increased by 48 per cent.

Electronics was the largest product group in terms of R & D spending by business enterprises in 1989; it amounted to 30 per cent of the total. This was followed by chemicals, with 22 per cent.

International Comparisons

The review contains a breakdown of total British R & D by sector and by source of finance (a total of R & D performed within industry, government, research councils and higher education). Expressed in OECD terms of definition as gross domestic expenditure on R & D (GERD), this total is not comparable with figures used earlier. The GERD total for 1989 was £11,500 million, an increase of 12 per cent on 1988.

Britain's contribution to the European Community R & D budget in 1989-90 was £167 million, which is set to rise to £225 million in 1992-93. From 1985 to 1989 Britain's GERD, expressed as a proportion of gross domestic product, fluctuated between 2·2 and 2·3 per cent. Compared with five other major OECD countries, Britain spent more than Italy (1·1 to 1·3 per cent) and a similar proportion to France. However, it spent proportionately less than the Federal Republic of Germany (2·7 to 2·9 per cent), the United States (2·8 to 2·9 per cent) and Japan (2·6 to 2·7 per cent).

Technological Balance of Payments

The review gives figures for the technological balance of payments for six major OECD countries for the period 1984-88. Only the

Table 2
R & D Performed in Each Sector in Britain in 1989 According to Source of Finance *£ million*

	Sectors carrying out the work				
	Government	Higher education	Industry	Other	Total
Sectors providing the funds					
Government	1,436	1,314	1,249	216	4,214
Higher education	–	81	–	–	81
Industry	157	132	5,328	192	5,809
Overseas	29	73	1,023	14	1,138
Other	53	175	–	61	289
Total	1,675	1,774	7,600	483	11,532

Note: Differences between totals and the sums of their component parts are due to rounding.

United States was in surplus in every year while Britain was in surplus for the first two. The other countries were in continuous deficit.

Shorter Notes

TAXPAYER'S CHARTER

The new taxpayer's charter was launched by Mr Francis Maude, the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, on 13 August. It is one of the first separate charters to be issued following the publication of the Citizen's Charter in July (see pp 293-300).

Mr Maude said that the new charter would build on the success of the original taxpayer's charter of 1986 (see pp 276-7, 1986). The aims of that charter continue but the new one seeks to convey them more clearly, by expressing them in a fresh and more focused way. It sets out the standard of service that people can expect from the Inland Revenue and Customs and Excise. Both departments should be:

– fair;
– helpful;
– efficient; and
– accountable.

The new charter represents the start of a series of initiatives to be taken by the Inland Revenue and Customs and Excise in the coming months. For the Inland Revenue, these include:

– targets for dealing promptly with taxpayers' letters;
– redesign of forms;
– the appointment of named customer service managers;
– new services leaflets;[1] and
– more flexible opening hours for enquiry offices.

Customs and Excise will be launching later in 1991 separate charters for payers of value added tax, excise duty traders, those involved in inland clearance of goods and travellers.

Sources: Inland Revenue and Customs and Excise news releases, 13.8.91.

PASSENGER SAFETY ON THE RIVER THAMES

All 27 recommendations in the Marine Accident Investigation Branch (MAIB) report[2] into the 1989 collision between the passenger launch *Marchioness* and the dredger *Bowbelle* have been accepted by the Government.

[1] *You and the Inland Revenue.* Explains how people can obtain help and information from tax enquiry centres and tax and collection offices. Available free from the Inland Revenue Public Enquiry Room, West Wing, Somerset House, London WC2R 1LB.

[2] *Report of the Chief Inspector of Marine Accidents into the Collision between the Passenger Launch* Marchioness *and* MV Bowbelle *with Loss of Life on the River Thames on 20 August 1989.* Department of Transport Marine Accident Investigation Branch. HMSO, £11. ISBN 0 11 551025 7.

The collision, in which 51 people lost their lives, took place on the River Thames in the early hours of 20 August 1989. Certain measures were implemented by the Government both in the immediate aftermath of the accident and on the publication of the MAIB interim report (see p 357, 1989). The full report was released on 15 August, although its recommendations had already been published and accepted by the Government.

The report finds that neither vessel was aware of the other's presence until too late to take effective avoiding action, and that in each vessel the maintenance of a good look-out was seriously hampered as a result of design. The *Marchioness* also failed to keep to the starboard channel; this was linked to the failure in look-out because her skipper plainly thought the channel was clear. These failures all stemmed, in part, from bad practices which had grown up over many years.

In total, the report made 27 recommendations, of which some were regarded as particularly urgent:

– a forward look-out should be stationed on all large vessels on the Thames with aft wheelhouses;

– an additional light at the bow should be fitted on all large vessels on the Thames at night;

– those in charge of Thames passenger launches should be reminded of the need to look astern frequently and to monitor radio traffic messages, including before departure;

– existing guidelines on bridge visibility for sea-going vessels should be enforced if necessary by regulations;

– regulations should be introduced to ensure minimum standards of visibility from the bridge of passenger launches;

– in small passenger vessels the sound level in the wheelhouse should not exceed 75 decibels [dB(A)], even when a disco party is in progress;

– in vessels on which disco parties are in progress, there should be means to cut out all disco sounds when safety announcements are being made;

– navigational broadcasts made by port authority radio stations should be preceded by an alerting tone;

– passenger launches should be required to carry persons trained in emergency procedures in addition to their minimum operational crew;

– vessels on the Thames should keep as far as possible to the starboard side of the fairway, even when the fairway is thought to be clear;

– a signalling system to control traffic through the Thames bridges should be developed as soon as possible; and

– military helicopters designed for search-and-rescue work should carry heat-seeking equipment.

The then Secretary of State, Mr Cecil Parkinson, accepted all the recommendations when they were published separately in July 1990. Action has already been completed on 20 out of the 27 and will be virtually complete on the remainder by the end of 1991.

Source: Department of Transport news releases, 15.8.91.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS LICENCES

Two new telecommunications class licences were issued by the Government on 2 August, implementing policies set out in the White Paper *Competition and Choice: Telecommunications Policy for the 1990s* (see pp 108-9). The Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, Mr Peter Lilley, described the licences as an important step forward in the liberalisation of the telecommunications market in Britain.

The self-provision licence permits companies and others to set up their own telecommunications system, rather than having to rely on the two public network service providers, BT and Mercury. The licence will allow such systems also to be used to communicate with other parties, such as suppliers or customers, through connections to the public network. Such systems will be subject to two provisos: first, that all traffic on the system must either originate or terminate with the person running the network; and secondly, that there must be no charge for any telecommunications service provided over the system. For many users, the new licence will replace the existing branch systems general

licence, under which most businesses have hitherto run their internal telecommunications system.

The satellite class licence will authorise any kind of one- or two-way satellite link not connected to the public network, including mobile and transportable systems as well as fixed ones. The number of satellite terminals that one operator can run will not be limited.

Mr Lilley said that the fact that both of these were class licences was in itself a significant piece of liberalisation. Companies would no longer need to apply to the Department of Trade and Industry for an individual licence. Firms would still need clearance for the use of radio frequencies, but would otherwise be able to concentrate on installing and running their new networks, subject only to the terms of the new licences. 'I hope that many companies will take full advantage of the new opportunities which these two licences create,' he concluded.

Source: Department of Trade and Industry news release, 2.8.91.

Environmental, Social and Cultural Affairs

Census of Population 1991: Preliminary Results

The preliminary counts of the population present in England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland on census night were published in July.[1]

The figures will be superseded by final results contained in the detailed county reports for England and Wales and for each region of Scotland due to be published from November 1991 onwards. It is planned to publish the first summary report for Northern Ireland in the autumn of 1992.

England and Wales

The population present in England and Wales on census night (21-22 April – see p 202) totalled 48,960,000, some 57,000 (0·1 per cent) less than in 1981. This compares with a predicted figure, based on estimates made before the census, of 50 million. The preliminary total will be subject to a small upward revision in the final census count.

Regional Changes

Three of the eight English regions – East Anglia, the South West and the East Midlands – recorded increases in population between 1981 and 1991 (see table). The other five regions had decreases, the largest falls being in the North West and the North. Within the South East, the decline in the population of Greater London was largely offset by the increase in the rest of the region. A small population rise was recorded in Wales.

These regional changes in population were mostly due to changes in levels of net migration into or out of the regions. Changes in birth and death rates were more uniform across the country.

District Changes

Of the 32 Greater London boroughs and the City of London, only Tower Hamlets recorded a rise in population between 1981 and 1991.

The populations of the six metropolitan counties (Greater Manchester, Merseyside, South Yorkshire, Tyne and Wear, West Midlands and West Yorkshire), which include the principal English cities, declined by 5·2 per cent to 10,651,000.

In non-metropolitan districts, the population rose over the same period by 2·7 per cent to 31,931,000. The largest percentage increases were recorded in remoter, mainly rural districts.

Increases in population were recorded in four of the eight Welsh counties.

Scotland

The population in Scotland on census night was 4,957,000. This was about 173,000 less than in 1981 and the first time since the 1931 census that the population present had fallen below 5 million.

The drop in population between 1981 and 1991 was mainly recorded in the central belt of Scotland (Strathclyde, Central, Lothian and Tayside) and in the Shetland and West-

[1] *1991 Census: Preliminary Report for England and Wales.* Office of Population Censuses and Surveys. HMSO, £8. ISBN 0 11 691347 9; *1991 Census: Preliminary Report for Scotland.* General Register Office (Scotland). HMSO, Edinburgh, £3·80;. ISBN 0 11 494180 7; *The Northern Ireland Census 1991: Preliminary Report.* Department of Health and Social Services, Registrar General Northern Ireland. HMSO, Belfast, £6·20. ISBN 0 337 07660 X.

Regional Population Change in England and Wales 1981-1991

Area	Population present on census night 1991	Population change 1981-91	Percentage change 1981-91
England and Wales	48,960,000	–57,000	–0·1
England	46,161,000	–65,000	–0·1
Regions of England			
North	3,005,000	–93,000	–3·0
Yorkshire and Humberside	4,767,000	–87,000	–1·8
East Midlands	3,902,000	95,000	2·5
East Anglia	2,007,000	143,000	7·7
South East	16,714,000	–18,000	–0·1
Greater London	*6,378,000*	*–318,000*	*–4·8*
Remainder of South East	*10,336,000*	*300,000*	*3·0*
South West	4,565,000	239,000	5·5
West Midlands	5,066,000	–72,000	–1·4
North West	6,134,000	–272,000	–4·3
Wales	2,799,000	8,000	0·3

ern Isles. Strathclyde, which incorporates the city of Glasgow, had the largest decrease, its population falling from 2,404,000 to 2,218,000.

As in Glasgow, the populations of the cities of Edinburgh in Lothian, Dundee in Tayside, and Aberdeen in Grampian all registered a decline.

Increases in population were recorded in the regions of Grampian, Highland, Dumfries and Galloway, Borders and Fife. Despite increases in population in rural areas and decreases in urban areas, the rural areas of Scotland remain sparsely inhabited.

Northern Ireland

The population of Northern Ireland on census night totalled 1,570,000. In the 1981 census the enumerated population was 1,490,000 but, allowing for the effect of non-response in some areas, the overall population was subsequently estimated at 1,532,000.

The excess of births over deaths (116,000) between 1981 and 1991, when placed against the total estimated population for 1981, suggests a net outward migration of around 78,000 over the period.

Of the 26 local government districts in Northern Ireland, 22 recorded an increase in population since 1981.

Only in Belfast, Antrim, Castlereagh and Strabane was there a population decline.

Shorter Notes

OVERSEAS STUDENTS

A recent government survey shows that the number of overseas students taking further and higher education courses[1] in England, Wales and Scotland rose by 11 per cent to 77,800 between 1988 and 1989. In 1989 the countries providing the most students continued to be Hong Kong (7,300), Malaysia (7,200) and the United States (5,700), accounting between them for about one in four of all overseas students. The number of students from European Community countries increased to 19,800 in 1989, nearly a third more than in 1988 and five times as many as in 1980.

Other findings reveal that:

[1] Higher education is defined as higher courses in any type of educational institution – broadly, those of a standard higher than General Certificate of Education (GCE) Advanced (A) level – and further education as all other post-school courses.

– seven out of eight students from abroad were enrolled on higher education courses in 1989;

– two-thirds of overseas students were attending universities, of whom almost one-half were postgraduates;

– there was a 6 per cent growth in the number of overseas students on further education courses from 1988 to 1989;

– within further education, the proportion of overseas students studying for GCE A levels or the General Certificate of Secondary Education fell from 48 per cent in 1980 to 18 per cent in 1989;

– in 1989, 37 per cent of overseas students were women compared with 35 per cent in 1988 and 25 per cent in 1980; and

– the most popular subject area in 1989 was engineering and technology (attracting 20 per cent of all overseas students), followed by social sciences (14 per cent) and business and financial studies (14 per cent).

Commenting on the survey, Mr Alan Howarth, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Department of Education and Science, said: 'Overseas students are very welcome to this country. . . . Despite the attractions of other countries, they come here in increasing numbers because a British qualification continues to be a much valued prize. I am particularly pleased to see [the] big increase in the number of European Community students coming here. This no doubt reflects the enthusiastic response of [British] institutions to the European Community's . . . programmes for student exchange [see pp 286-7].'

Sources: Department of Education and Science Statistical Bulletin, *Students from Abroad in Great Britain 1980 to 1989*, No 20/91, available free from DES Analytical Services Branch, Mowden Hall, Staindrop Road, Darlington DL3 9BG; Department of Education and Science news release, 8.8.91.

REVIEW OF FAMILY PLANNING SERVICES

Regional health authorities in England have been asked to review their family planning services, and to ensure effective co-ordination of services offered by family doctors and National Health Service (NHS) clinics. Announcing the review on 30 July, the Minister of State at the Department of Health, Mrs Virginia Bottomley, said that the authorities would need to have three objectives:

– a clear and comprehensive assessment of people's local needs for family planning services;

– balanced and complementary services from family doctors and clinics; and

– full take-up of services, and ways of monitoring their effectiveness.

The Department of Health will issue guidelines later in 1991 to help the authorities in their planning.

The Government spends nearly £100 million a year on family planning provision in England, an estimated 33 per cent increase in real terms since 1979. In addition, over £500,000 from government funds is being provided in 1991-92 to voluntary organisations such as the Family Planning Association and Brook Advisory Centres to complement NHS provision for family planning. It is also funding development work in a number of family planning areas, such as teenage pregnancy counselling, consumer surveys, and the assessment of local needs for family planning.

Source: Department of Health news release, 30.7.91.

RESIDENTIAL CHILD CARE

The Government has accepted the main recommendations of the report by Sir William Utting into residential child care in England, which was published on 20 August.

The report[1] recommends that:

– the Secretary of State for Health should report regularly to Parliament and the public on progress in implementing the Children Act 1989 (see pp 207-9, 1989);

– local authorities should make plans for their child care services which include resi-

[1] *Children in the Public Care.* Department of Health. Social Services Inspectorate. HMSO, £9-95. ISBN 0 11 321455 3.

dential care as a positive option for helping children in need;

– local authorities should apply rigorous management techniques to the delivery of good quality residential care;

– local authorities should introduce personnel management policies to encourage staff to enter and stay in residential care;

– local authority children's homes must be regularly inspected by their own 'arms length' inspection units; and

– there must be further investment in staff training and qualification to increase the proportion of suitably trained and qualified staff.

Announcing the Government's support for the review, the Minister of State at the Department of Health, Mrs Virginia Bottomley, said that in future the Secretary of State would make regular reports on progress to Parliament and that the Government would be having urgent discussions on the report's recommendations with local government and other organisations involved.

Source: Department of Health news release, 20.8.91.

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